



FACT SHEET

Module 19

Guidelines for Risk Taking

Never risk more than you can afford to lose.

One example is that of a young driver who breaks a specific traffic law or parental rule resulting in the loss of his license. In this situation, the young driver might be risking too much.

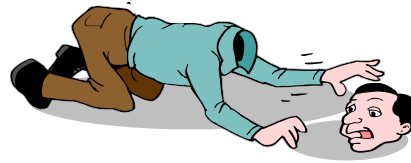
Do not risk a lot for a little.

An example of this behavior might be ignoring a railroad crossing to save a few seconds or even minutes of time. The risk of a very severe crash or an expensive ticket is not worth that small amount of time saved.

Consider the odds and your situation.

Distinguish between elements of driving that are beyond your control (actions of other drivers, weather, pedestrians, etc.) from those you do control (speed, use of alcohol, wearing safety belts, obedience to traffic signals, etc.). In dealing with risk, drivers should try to use those things they can control to help deal with those things they cannot control.

Types of Collisions



Head-On Collisions

The possibility of serious injury and death is more likely with a front-impact crash. Head-on collisions are more likely to occur on two-lane highways, in narrow lanes, and in construction zones.

Rear-End Collisions

Rear-end collisions are one of the most common types of multiple vehicle collisions. Tailgaters are especially at risk. You can lower your risk if someone is tailgating you by slowing down to encourage the tailgater to pass you.

Side-Impact Collisions

Despite recent safety advances in side protection such as reinforced steel beams in doors and side-mounted airbags, most vehicles are less well-equipped to withstand a side impact than they are a head-on impact. If you are at risk of colliding with the side of another vehicle, honk your horn and flash your lights to warn the other driver. Swerve right rather than left when there is no time to look first.

If your car is about to be hit, your best option is to accelerate rather than brake if the way is clear. Accelerating will get you past the danger more quickly. Braking may actually contribute to a side-impact collision, especially if the other driver has judged that your speed is sufficient to avoid a crash. If the way ahead is not clear, another alternative is to turn in the direction that the other vehicle is moving to force the impact behind you to the rear of your vehicle. If you turn in the direction of the approaching car, you risk colliding head-on with it.